URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL,

BURLEY-IN-WHARFEDALE.



Annual Report

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health,

1908.

With the Compliments of the

Medical Officer of Health.

Burley-in-Wharfedale,

Jan. 21*st*, 1909.

To the Chairman and Members of the
Urban District Council,

Gentlemen,

I have the honour of bringing before your notice my report on the health conditions appertaining to your district for the year 1908, together with comparative statistics showing how the past year stands with its predecessors.

TOPOGRAPHICAL NOTE.

Your district, some 3,133 acres in area, is partly agricultural and partly manufacturing. The population at the census 1901, 3,110, has been considerably augmented by natural increase and new residents, and I calculate the number to be 3,580 in the middle of the year. There are 864 dwelling houses in the district, few of them empty,

of a substantial character for the most part, with plenty of open space about them. There are no crowded courts or alleys, and as my report will show, little or no opportunity offered for the propagation of preventible disease. Allotment gardens are successfully managed, and with the open moors as playground, there is every opportunity offered for leading a healthy life.

BIRTHS.

The number of births registered during the year is actually the smallest on record, and consequently, with the increasing population, the birth rate is much smaller than any of our records which go back nearly forty years. The actual figure is 17.3 per 1,000 of the people living. After being within a fraction of 20 for five years the rate has got well below that number and, judging by similar experiences throughout the country, bids fair to remain at that unsatisfactory average. There were 62 births recorded, 38 male and 24 female; and in the previous year 70 births gave a rate equal to 20. During the last ten years the births of males have exceeded females by 35.

DEATHS.

The total number of deaths occurring in your district was 38, 26 males and 12 females Thirty took place in

the West Riding Asylum at Scalebor, and are not considered further in this report. One death was that of a person coming to the village in a dying condition, and one inhabitant passed away in the Infirmary of a neighbouring town. The rate of mortality is equal to 10.5 per 1,000 living—a low average, but one which has been equalled in some previous reports. In 1907 the rate was 14.8. It is curious to note that contrary to almost universal experience, the mortality among males has been less than among females, during the last ten years.

Causes of death.

When we come to consider the various complaints which have had fatal result, the healthy character of the year is made even more manifest than in the bald statement of the rate of mortality. Six deaths were ascribed to old age, but no fewer than twenty-one deaths or 55 per cent, were of persons over 60 years of age; three deaths were those of infants weak from birth and not having a fair start in life's handicap, and two were due to drowning in the River Wharfe.

Phthisis, or consumption of the lungs, still claims some victims; but in no such proportion as in former years, four deaths were due to this cause, one being that of a patient in a hopeless state on arrival in the locality. No other tubercular complaints are mentioned, and I believe your district is less subject to these insidious maladies

than at any period of its history. The breezy uplands and moors over which your insistence has secured us public footpaths for all time, and the great use to which they are turned, have contributed in a great measure to this desirable end.

Acute lung diseases, bronchitis and penumonia, caused eight deaths, and three were ascribed to heart, and five to brain, disease. No death occurred from any infectious complaint, nor from cancer or other malignant disease.

INFANT MORTALITY.

There is an improvement to report on last year's figure representing the mortality among infants. Under the age of twelve months, five deaths were registered, or in proportion to the number of births, 82 per 1,000. This is a fairly low average, and one which it is difficult to reduce, or even maintain, as in a small district the deaths of one or two infants from immaturity, or debility, at birth can produce a very marked increase in the yearly average of mortality. A more equable test is to take a longer period of five or ten years, and I find that during the latter period there have been 711 births, with 66 deaths under one year. This yields an infant mortality, for the whole period, of 85.6 per 1,000 born, and will compare with a town of 35,000 inhabitants. By taking a series of years we can eliminate any error due to the fact

that some years are more favourable to child life than others, owing to our fickle climate ; and can consider that any undue amount of infantile mortality must be due to other causes, the chief of which are maternal neglect, unwholesome food, especially if contaminated by flies, disregard of ordinary sanitary precepts and the industrial employment of mothers.

The Notification of Births Act 1907, has not been adopted, nor do I find any necessity for it in your district, as every birth comes under the immediate attention of a medical practitioner. Puerperal diseases are practically unknown, and no one practises under the Midwives' Act,

DISEASES PREVALENT.

Of the notifiable infectious diseases, there were but eight cases during the year, viz., three scarlatina, two diphtheria, and three erysipelas. Two were sent to the Isolation Hospital—one scarlatina and one diphtheria. Although surrounded by townships suffering under epidemics, we kept clear from invasion until December when a case of measles was observed at the National (Infants) school, and a smart outbreak resulted among the smaller children. I deemed it necessary to advise the closing of the school a week before the usual holiday and during the vacation the complaint subsided.

No other illness was specially prominent at any season, and the whole year was healthy above the average. Summer diarrhoea, in spite of a spell of hot weather, was never prevalent nor was there any complaint of ill health from drains, or neglected scavenging.

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS.

	1908	07	England & Wales. 1908	
Birth rate	17.3	20	26.5	per 1,000 living.
Death rate	10.5	14.8	14.7	,,
Zymotic death rate ..	0	.84	1.29	,,
Phthesis death rate	.83	.84	—	,,
Respiratory death rate	2.2	2.8	—	,,
Infantile death rate ..	82	128	121	per 1,000 born

ISOLATION HOSPITAL.

This institution still exerts its useful influence, although we have fortunately rarely had occasion to take advantage of its benefits. Only two cases have required removal from home, and in each case the prompt isolation of the patient prevented others from being infected. The cost of the cases was £6 19s. and your annual contribution £161 4s. 8d.

SANITARY MATTERS.

Water Supply.

For the first time, to my knowledge, our water has shown some tendency to solution of lead from the service pipes. Although such action might have been anticipated, as moorland waters have this property, yet repeated analyses have failed to give us any apprehension on the subject, and no case of lead poisoning, nor any disease associated with plumbism, has ever been reported. In the autumn, samples were requested by the County Medical Officer, and were reported to show a slight trace of lead after standing over twenty-four hours in a service pipe. The water in the reservoir was found to contain an excess of acid, derived from the peaty gathering ground, and washed out by the heavy rain following a dry summer. A quantity of lime stone was at once introduced into the stream at the inlet of the reservoir, and the acidity neutralised. Samples taken after this treatment showed no trace of lead, after prolonged contact with the metal.

This treatment will be continued, and all fear of any ill effects eliminated.

The supply of water for domestic purposes was abundant at all times ; a few places, off the track of the mains, are without a satisfactory supply and steps are being taken to enforce the owners to remedy the deficiency.

RAINFALL 1908.

Month	Inches	No. of days on which rain fell.	Greatest rainfall.	Date of greatest rainfall.
Jany.	1.94	11	.47	25th
Febry	2.53	12	.50	23rd
March	3.63	15	1.29	24th & 25th
April	2.43	13	.77	30th
May	2.93	13	.70	12th
June	1.11	6	.42	14th
July	3.89	11	.69	16th
Augst.	2.47	11	.74	31st
Sept.	4.15	14	1.25	20th
October	2.08	8	.51	19th
Nov.	2.30	11	.47	25th
December	2.69	12	.51	10th
	32.15	137		

Compared with the previous year, the rainfall was less—32.15 in. against 35.8 in., and there were 22 more days on which rain did not fall. The rain gauge is 415 feet above the level of the sea.

There has been no need for any extension of the existing sewers, which, with one short exception in Station Road, are in a satisfactory condition. A flushing tank has been devised and completed, so that the trunk drains can be

effectively cleansed. Water carriage is gradually taking the place of the old conservative method, over 50 per cent. of the houses being now provided in this manner, and every year sees additions to the number. There has been considerable activity in the building trade, a long row of good artizans dwellings being completed, and several residences of the villa type. These are all readily let, or sold, as soon as finished, and the demand for medium rented houses is not satisfied. Every building is inspected and certified by your Surveyor, before passing out of the builder's hand.

The Cowsheds have been inspected, and found in fair sanitary state so far as the light and air regulations are concerned, but much more could be attempted to keep the places cleaner. In some modern farms attention is paid to cleanliness, the stalls are swept out, and the cows are groomed and washed before being milked, but these are in a minority, and in most cases little or no care is exercised to avoid visible contamination of the milk, as a very superficial examination of the sediment at the bottom of milk cans will demonstrate. The recent report of the Royal Commission on tuberculosis in cattle furnishes a strong argument for further stringency in the regulations on this important subject and extracts from it might be printed and circulated among all who deal in milk. Tuberculosis

itself is a difficult problem, animals showing the disease on the udder should undoubtedly be rejected as milk producers, and it is probable that in a few years, any cow in an emaciated condition with a cough, will be looked upon as a source of danger, if the milk be used as food for man.

I append the report of your Nuisance Inspector, Mr. Hargreaves, and in it will be found the details of much conscientious work in his department. The house to house inspection will be continued during this year, and a full report rendered you in due course.

The roads have received special attention during the year, and interesting experiments have been made The tar spraying effectually laid the dust during the summer months, and gave satisfaction to wayside dwellers. After the frost and rain of winter, the surface is not so good, as it cuts up and is churned into disagreeable tarry mud. Evidently the process of spraying will have to be repeated yearly. Three portions of your main roads were experimentally re-laid with lime or granite, soaked in some tarry preparation. The success of the experiment appears to vary directly as the cost of the system adopted, and if not prohibitive in this respect, the whole road made of the most expensive material, would relieve us of both dust and mud for ever.

The workshops, factories and workplaces have all been inspected and found to be in a satisfactory state. No additions have been registered during the year.

The trade of the district has suffered from the general depression, but perhaps to a less degree, and I trust that the present year will show a revival of prosperous times.

I am, gentlemen,

Obediently yours,

H. HEBBLETHWAITE,

Medical Officer of Health.

Fellow of the Institute of Public Health.

SANITARY INSPECTORS REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 1908.

January 9th, 1909.

DEAR SIR,

I beg to submit my Report as Sanitary Inspector of the District as follows :—

During the past year the building trade has been particularly brisk, 30 new houses having been certified as fit for habitation as compared with 23 in 1907 ; 8 in 1906, and 12 in 1905. Whilst in course of erection these buildings have been systematically inspected, and any contraventions of the bye laws pointed out and rectified All new drains have been inspected before filling in, 71 such inspections having been made.

I have received 33 complaints, 27 of which have been in respect of drains. 91 Inspections have been made of

defective drainage alone, it being necessary in the cases of 21 houses to entirely reconstruct the same. The ready response of owners to alter or reconstruct bad drains after receiving a first suggestion, is very encouraging.

The sewers and manholes throughout the District have been periodically inspected and cleansed. A flushing chamber has been built to flush a trunk sewer. The sewer in one part of Station Road is in an unsatisfactory condition, and it is hoped that some improvement will be made during the year.

The scavenging of the District continues to be carried out satisfactorily by the council's workmen. A set of tanks has been built for dealing with the nightsoil.

About 55 per cent of the houses within the District are now on the water carriage system, and while only 14 pail closets have been converted to W.C.'s during the year, I am hoping for better results this year.

15 rooms have been disinfected by spraying ; 5 for scarlet fever ; 5 for diphtheria, and 5 for consumption. 46 inspections have been made of the cowsheds of the District, and although much good work has been done,

and 7 notices served requiring alterations to be made, much still requires constant attention.

The Workshops have been inspected and found to be in a generally good and clean condition.

The water supply throughout the year has received careful and continual attention, the mains and service reservoir having been periodically cleansed.

In the case of 31 houses where the water supply has been insufficient, the owners have been called upon to provide a sufficient supply. A house to house inspection of the whole of the District is in progress.

In conclusion allow me to express my best thanks for your uniform kindness and courtesy, and for the ready advice which you have always so kindly given me.

Yours obediently,

F. HARGREAVES.

DR. H. HEBBLETHWAITE,

Medical Officer of Health

Burley-in-Wharfedale Urban District Council.

Vital Statistics of Whole District during 1908 and previous years.

Year.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births.		Total Deaths Reg. in District				Total Deaths in Public Institutions in District.	Deaths of non-residents registered in the District.	Deaths of residents registered beyond the District.	Nett Deaths at all Ages belonging to the District	
				Under 1 Year		At all ages.						
		Number	Rate.*	Number	Rate per 1,000 Births registd.	Number	Rate.*				Number	Rate.*
1898	2850	79	27.7	8	101	38	13				36	12.2
1899	3000	66	22	12	131	38	12.6				36	12
1900	3100	75	24.2	11	146	54	17.4				53	17
1901	3310	86	26	6	44	40	12.1				36	10.9
1902	3300	81	24.5	10	123	49	14.5				49	14
1903	3310	65	19.7	2	30	54	14.8†	15	15	2	41	12
1904	3400	68	20	5	57	57	13.4†	12	12	0	44	12.9
1905	3450	68	20	6	88	60	16.7†	17	18	1	40	11.5
1906	3500	70	20	3	43	64	17†	24	24	1	40	11.4
1907	3550	70	19.6	9	128	88	23†	33	33	2	55	14.85
Averages for years 1898–1907.		73.8	22.3	7.2	89.1	54.2					43	12.8
1908	3580	62	17.3	5	82	68	17.5†	30	34	1	38	10.6

* Rates calculated per 1,000 of estimated population.

† In these rates the inmates of the Scalebor Retreat are added to the estimated population.

TABLE III.

Cases of Infectious Disease notified during the Year 1908.

Notifiable Disease	At all ages.	Under 1 year	1 to 5 years	5 to 15 years.	15 to 25 years.	25 to 65 years.	65 and upwards.
Dipthheria (including Membranous croup) ..	2	—	—	1	—	1	—
Erysipelas ..	3	—	—	—	—	3	—
Scarlet fever ..	3	—	2	1	—	—	—
Totals ..	8	0	2	2	0	3	0

TABLE IV

Causes of, and Ages at, Death during Year 1908.

Causes of Death	All ages	Under 1 year	1 and under 5	5 and under 15	15 and under 25	25 and under 65	65 and upwards
Enteritis ..	2	1	–	–	–	1	–
Phthisis (Pulmonary Tuberculosis)	3	–	–	–	–	3	–
Bronchitis	7	1	–	–	–	3	3
Pneumonia	1	–	1	–	–	–	–
Pleurisy ..	1	–	–	–	–	1	–
Other diseases of Respiratory organs	2	–	1	–	–	–	1
Heart diseases ..	3	–	–	–	–	2	1
Accidents ..	1	–	–	–	1	–	–
Nervous System ..	2	1	–	1	–	–	–
Cerebral haem. ..	3	–	–	–	–	1	2
Old Age ..	6	–	–	–	–	–	6
All other causes ..	7	2	–	1	–	3	1
All causes	38	5	2	2	1	14	14

Deaths in Public Institutions in the district:—
Bronchitis 1, Pneumonia 1, Other diseases of Respiratory Organs 1, Heart Diseases 2, Nervous System 10, Cerebral Haem. 4, Old Age 7, All other causes 4, Total 30.

Factories, Workshops, Laundries, Workplaces and Homework.

Inspections.

(Including Inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors or Inspectors of Nuisances).

Factories (including Factory Laundries) ..	3
Workshops (including Workshop Laundries)	6
Workplaces	14
Total	23

One Underground Bakehouse registered—condition good.

Underground Bakehouses (s. 101) :—

Certificates granted during the year ..	0
In use at the end of the year	1

Deaths from stated Causes in Weeks and Months under One Year of Age.

TABLE V.

Cause of Death	Under 1 Week Total under	1 Month	1-2 Months	3-4 months	5-6 Months	11-12 Months	Total Deaths under 1 Year
All Causes—Certified	1	1	1	1	1	1	5
Diarrhoeal Diseases	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
Wasting Diseases–Injury at Birth	1	1	—	—	—	—	1
Atrophy, Debility, Marasmus ..				1			1
Other Causes—Convulsions ..	—	—	1	—	—	—	1
Bronchitis	—	—	—	—	—	1	1
	1	1	1	1	1	1	5

D. GREAVES,

Southfield Press,

Burley-in-Wharfedale.